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ABSTRACT

Data from a longitudinal sample of 14,721 White (7,193 male, 7,528 female) and 5,197 Black (2,400 male, 2,797 female) respondents tested first between ages 16 and 19 and in two follow-ups were explored in relation to Black-White, male-female differences in self-esteem and causal orientations. On general self-esteem scores, Blacks rated themselves more positively than did Whites. Blacks also rated themselves more positively on specific self-beliefs, (e.g., social attractiveness), although the magnitude of differences in such cases was quite small. On control measures, Blacks perceived greater external control pertaining to both cultural events and personal efficacy, although they had slightly greater expectations about future academic success. Results about general and personal self-efficacy of Blacks are somewhat inconsistent with earlier reports. Females tended to show less self-efficacy than males, but there were no interactions of race and sex. Even in the presence of significant effects for race and/or sex, mean differences tended to be relatively small. The findings suggest that, although differences exist between races and between sexes, they are rarely of large magnitude, and they tend to dissipate over time as adolescents leave school and become adults. (Author/NB)

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RACE DIFFERENCES IN SELF-PERCEPTION AND LOCUS OF CONTROL DURING ADOLESCENCE AND EARLY ADULTHOOD

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ABSTRACT

Data from a longitudinal sample of 14,721 White (7193 male, 7528 female) and 5197 Black (2400 male, 2797 female) respondents tested first between ages 16 and 19 and in two follow-ups were explored in relation to Black-White, male-female differences in self-esteem and causal orientations. On general self-esteem scores, Blacks rated themselves more positively than Whites. Blacks also rated themselves more positively on specific self-beliefs (e.g. social attractiveness), although the magnitude of differences in such cases was quite small. On control measures, Blacks perceived greater external control pertaining to both cultural events and personal efficacy, although they had slightly greater expectations about future academic success. Results about general and personal self-efficacy of Blacks are somewhat inconsistent with earlier reports. Females tended to show less self-efficacy than males, but there were no interactions of race and sex. Even in the presence of significant effects for race and/or sex, mean differences tended to be relatively small.

Development and changes in self-perception of adolescents have attracted a great deal of research interest. Effects of socio-cultural factors on such perceptions have been addressed, including racial differences in self-esteem and other self-related perceptions. Despite the volume of research on these issues, the literature does not provide us with a solid understanding of these processes. Murray, Smith, and West (1989) have noted the gaps in our understanding about comparative differences in various psychological and psychosocial processes, including self-esteem, between Black and White adolescents

It is a popular belief (see White & Parham, 1990) that Blacks have more negative self-esteem, or self-concepts, than Whites. This assumption is rarely supported in the literature. Peterson and Ramirez (1971) do report this effect. However, many others report higher self-esteem among Blacks than among Whites (cf Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972; Harris & Stokes, 1978; Porter & Washington, 1979; Wade, Thompson, Tashakkori, & Valente, 1989; Tashakkori, Thompson, Wade, & Valente, 1990). When reported, the effect seems to hold across age and SES groups, in large sample studies; for example, in the Rosenberg and Simmons (1972) study of 2600 children aged 3-12 in Baltimore public schools, the effect held across age groups and with SES controlled. Still other research demonstrates no meaningful racial differences in self-esteem (see Kuhlman & Bieliauskas, 1976; Wylie,1979; Rosenberg,1979; Bahman & O'Malley, 1984).

It is likely that discrepant findings may be attributable in part to different measures of constructs or focuses on different aspects of the self-concept. Gray-Little and Appelbaum (1979) report that observed racial differences in self-esteem tend to disappear when measurement differences are

taken into account. There is also evidence that, within subjects, self-esteem may change over time. In assessing self-esteem of Black and White adolescents, Wade (1989) reports more positive self-esteem of Blacks in early adolescence, but racial differences in self-esteem were not significant two years later.

Recent research (Wade et al., 1989) has suggested that there may be interactions between race and sex on self-esteem ratings. McJamerson (1990) has argued that the Black male is faced with greater stress, has less hope, and is less successful than Whites or Black females, all of which should portend lower self-esteem. In line with this argument, other researchers have found depression to be higher among Black males than among Black females or White males (see Gibbs, 1988 for a review). Findings regarding Whites show the opposite patterns: depression scores are lower for males than for females. Depression is generally known to accompany self-devaluation and low self-esteem (Tashakkori et. al., 1989). With regard to Whites, research (see Zuckerman, 1980) suggests that males rate themselves more highly than females on self-esteem scales. However, Rosenberg and Simmons (1972) found that the differences in self-concept between White males and females were greater than those between Black males and females and that the differences maintained when SES was controlled. Given such arguments about Blacks and the findings pertaining to White adolescents - and despite discrepant findings concerning race differences in self-esteem, race by gender interactions might be expected to show the self-esteem of Black males to be lower than that of Black females or Whites of either sex, while that of White males would be higher than that of White females. To deal with such possible effects on general self-esteem, it is necessary to investigate racial differences within each gender. Beyond a search for race by gender interactions on self-esteem, it is important to

consider factors beyond general self-esteem that might differentiate Black-White, male-female respondents. Tashakkori and Thompson (1989) have argued that general self- esteem should be derivable from perceptions of one's own qualities. Drawing from related research (e.g., Insko & Gilmore, 1984), such factors as personal appearance, popularity, and academic success would seem to be important contributors to overall self-concept. Some of these characteristics have been explored to some degree with mixed-race samples. For example, Wade et al. (1989) found both race and sex effects on perceived attractiveness and popularity, and effects were closely linked to general self-esteem.

Arguments such as those of McJamerson (1990) would suggest that a major factor underlying self-esteem - most likely being far more important than perceived physical attributes - might be a constellation of personal causation perceptions. That is, perceiving oneself as having little opportunity to succeed should undermine one's self-esteem. If such perceptions are indeed more severe among Blacks, particularly Black males, lower self-esteem should be found in that race and sub-group, triggered by perceptions of external control. That is, because of enduring social-economic inequalities in this culture, the causal perceptions of Blacks - and particularly of Black males - might stress external control, or a lack of self-efficacy, pertaining to both their own realm of activities and to cultural events.

In seminal studies comparing Black and White respondents, both Coleman and his colleagues (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld, & York, 1966) and Gurin and her colleagues (Gurin, Gurin, Lao, & Beattie, 1969) found differentiated control perceptions among sub-groups. Blacks did show stronger external beliefs than Whites in perceptions pertaining to personal

referents, for example, in statements pertaining to being blocked when one tries to get ahead. However, in relation to more global, or cultural, perceptions - for example, that people (not restricted to oneself) are responsible for their own failures - Black respondents showed equal, if not higher, internality.

There has been a recent emphasis on correlates and causes of self-esteem in relation to certain types of causal competencies, particularly in relation to academic performance and achievement, triggered by the notion that enhancing the self-concept will increase academic performance. While Calsyn and Kenny (1977) see this particular debate as "largely rhetorical for both conceptual and methodological reasons" (p. 136), their research results suggest that ability and/or achievement predict to, but are not derivable from, self-esteem and perceived causal competencies. It is thus the perception of competence that appears to be important in achievement motivation and accomplishment (Harter, 1983), specifically for underraters of own competence.

Such findings underscore the fact that both self-esteem and causal perceptions may be multidimensional. Harter (1983) concludes that achievement does affect self- evaluation, if the focus is specifically on academic domains, particularly for children who have accurate perceptions of their competence. "To the extent that achievement or cognitive competence is an important dimension of one's general sense of self, then one might speculate that achievement would predict self-esteem on a measure such as Rosenberg's..." but not necessarily on other measures of self-esteem (p. 335). Such distinctions may be particularly relevant in relation to Black self-perceptions. Martinez and Dukes (1987) reported

that Black respondents gave more positive self-evaluations than Whites when they were asked about their 'self- worth,' but less positive self-evaluations when they were asked about their intelligence, and Brookover and Passalacqua (1981) found that academic self-concept was higher in Black schools than in White schools, and it was associated with academic achievement in both settings.

Such focuses suggest that it is one's perception of control of one's outcomes that may predict not only to achievement motivation but to self-esteem. We have held that causal perceptions are at the very core of the self-concept, and this is consistent with much of the literature. Cooley (1902) focused on the importance of the "exercise of power, of being a cause" (p 145), and this theme has held throughout many variations of control: White (1963) held that the roots of self-esteem are in a developing sense of efficacy; Brim (1976) focused on personal control in relation to the self; and Bannister and Agnew (1977) noted the importance of self causality in self evaluations. Research has demonstrated meaningful relationships between control perceptions and self-esteem. For example, Prawat, Grissom, and Parish (1979) found high correlations between the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale. Harter (1983) reports on an unpublished study by Cunningham and Berberian (1976) of third and fourth graders to whom the Coopersmith scale and the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale developed by Crandall, Kathoosky, and Crandall (1965) were administered; these results demonstrate that high self esteem boys are more internal than those with low self esteem, while high self esteem girls are more external than those with low self-esteem. Felker

and Thomas (1971), in research in which the Piers-Harris and Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale were used, found the self concept to be related to responsibility for success in girls, for failure in boys. Piers (1977) found self-esteem related to success for both sexes. Using a scale which differentiates source of control into internal, external, and unknown control dimensions, Harter and Connell (1982) found that the "unknown" score predicted perceived competence: the less children admitted knowing what controlled their successes and failures, the lower their perceived competence.

Of greatest relevance to our own research are potential Black-White differences in causal orientations and the association of these with self-esteem. While Blacks are often shown to be more external in their orientations (Coleman et al. 1966; Lefcourt & Ladwig 1965), Banks, Beatty, Booth, Pope, and Hart (in press) conclude that no definitive statement can be made: Blacks may be largely internal, largely external, or largely neither -categories are neither discrete nor exclusive. There are implications for perceptions of control in relation to both academic achievement and self-esteem. Internality is often found to be associated with achievement; also, on achievement motivation, Castenell (1983) found that White adolescents scored higher on a traditional achievement motivation scale emphasizing self-esteem, independence, sense of control, and individualism; but Blacks scored higher on an achievement scale that emphasized school, home, and peer achievement motivation. Gurin and Epps (1975) found high motivation and performance positively related to internal (person-control) and external (system-blame) control factors among Black college students. As in Gurin et al. (1969), they found that Blacks who perceived discriminating obstacles and placed blame for problems on system barriers (rather than attributing lack of success to

their own personal inadequacies) tended to be more motivated and realistic than those who categorically denied the existence of racial discrimination as a personal problem. Gaa, Williams, and Johnson (1981), in examining several dimensions of locus of control - intellectual, social, and physical, reported some racial differences in respect to perceived success and failure in the various realms. From Katz (1967) we might infer that such multi-faceted perceptions represent realistic perceptions and effective coping strategies, and help to maintain a positive self-concept.

If our assumptions about the importance of causal orientations in self-esteem development and maintenance are valid, and the above offer support for this assumption, we would expect a relationship between self-esteem and causal perceptions, but such relationships might vary with the nature of the causal focus, might be affected by race, possibly interacting with gender, and might alter over time. Other variables, such as self-perceived attractiveness and popularity, while potential contributors to self-esteem, might be considered to be less important than causal orientations, particularly as one moves beyond adolescence. To obtain further insight about these issues, a longitudinal data set providing the relevant variables was explored.

METHOD

RESPONDENTS:

The High School and Beyond data base, a national survey of high school students, provided the data for the present study (see NCES, 1988a, and 1988b for more details regarding sampling design and variables). In 1980, survey instruments were administered to two (multistage stratified and clustered) large samples of (35,723) sophomores and (34,981) seniors in 1,015 public and private high schools across the country. These schools were selected from

24,725 high schools across the country with grades 10, 12, or both. Within each high school, 36 sophomores and 36 seniors were randomly selected (if there were fewer than 36, all eligible students were included). In 1982, a probability sample of each of these two samples was selected and followed up (resulting in a sample made up of approximately 30,000 of the 1980 sophomores and 12,200 of the 1980 seniors). Extensive recovery procedures were used to minimize attrition. This procedure was stopped after a recovery rate of 94% was achieved. The samples were followed up again in 1984. The sophomore follow-up sample consisted of 14,825 persons (92% or 13,682, actualized after completion of recovery procedures). The senior follow-up sample consisted of 11,995 persons. A recovery rate of 91% was achieved for this sample (n=10,925). The two samples were followed up again in 1986. Among the 1980 sophomores, 13,429 (91%) of the original 18,425 respondents were recovered. Among the 1980 seniors, 10,564 (88%) of the original 11,995 were recovered. For the present investigation, the White and Black respondents in the combined sophomore and senior samples who had participated in all rounds of measurement (1980, 1982, 1984, and 1986) were selected for analysis. Almost all (98%) of the respondents were born between 1961 and 1964. Only these respondents (ages of 16, 17, 18, and 19) were retained for analysis. The result was a total of 14,721 White (7193 male, 7528 female) and 5197 Black (2400 male, 2797 female) respondents.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES:

The respondents were asked to participate in a national study aimed at learning more about the experience of high school students and their plans for the future. The base year data were collected by on-campus administration of questionnaires to students. The first follow-up of the sophomore sample (then

mostly in 12th grade) was also performed in the same manner. The first follow-up of the older sample and all subsequent follow-ups of both samples were done through mail questionnaires. Nonrespondents to the mail survey, after initial recovery attempts by mail, were interviewed either in person or by mail (see NCES, 1988a, 1988b for more details). Information was obtained about a large number of variables, including sociodemographic characteristics, life events, attitudes, aspirations, and self-perceptions.

VARIABLES AND INSTRUMENTS:

General self-esteem, considered here as general self- acceptance or self-attitude (Rosenberg, 1979), was measured by a short Rosenberg scale (see Robinson & Shaver, 1973:81) consisting of 6 of the 10 original items. The six items in the data set were as follows: 1) I take a positive attitude toward myself; 2) I feel I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others; 3) I am able to do things as well as most other people; 4) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself; 5) I feel I do not have much to be proud of; 6) At times I think I am no good at all. For each time period, a Principal Components Analysis (SPSS-X, 1985) was performed on the self-esteem items. In all three, only one factor emerged, with an eigenvalue greater than unity, explaining, respectively for the three time periods, 41, 42, and 45% of the variance. The averages of these 6 items were calculated for each individual and each round of measurement and were considered as composite self-esteem scores. The resulting scores will be referred to as SELF1 (time 1 self-esteem), SELF2 (time 2 self-esteem), and SELF3 (time 3 self- esteem) throughout this report.

Measures of specific beliefs about own popularity- perceived attractiveness were present in 1980 for both seniors and sophomores. The wording of these items was as follows: "I am overweight," "Others think of me

as physically unattractive," and "I am popular with other students in my class." These items were followed by 2-point response scales (True, False). After proper recoding, an average of the three was calculated for each individual and was considered as the respondent's self-perception of social attractiveness.

In each round of measurement, there were 6 items measuring different aspects of perceived locus of causality of events. These 6 items were followed by 5-point "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" response scales. Responses were recoded from 1 to 5, such that higher scores indicated greater attributions of internal locus of causality. A Principal Components Analysis indicated that, for each round of measurement, two factors with eigenvalues greater than unity explained the six items. After a Varimax rotation for each round of measurement, four items had high loadings on the first factor; these items appear to measure a general attribution style or locus of control. These items, which bear some similarity to those described in the Coleman et al. and the Gurin et al. work as representing cultural beliefs reflecting the "Protestant Ethic," were as follows: "Good luck is more important than hard work for success," "Planning only makes a person unhappy, since plans hardly ever work out anyway," "People who accept their condition in life are happier than those who try to change things," and "Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me." The other two items (out of 6) had high loadings on the second factor. These items seem to measure personal control or Personal Efficacy (see Paulhus & Christie, 1981). They were stated as follows: "What happens to me is my own doing;" and "When I make plans, I am almost certain I can make them work." These items reflect the personal referent described in the Coleman et al. and Gurin et al. studies noted earlier.

For each respondent, and each round of measurement, responses to the two personal referent items were averaged to obtain a 'personal efficacy' score, and responses to the four cultural belief items were averaged to produce an 'attributional style' score. In addition to these specific control items, two measures pertaining to perceived academic ability and reported academic achievement were included to further tap perceived control and possible consequences.

RESULTS

A. SELF-ESTEEM SCORES:

General Self-esteem: Univariate ANOVA's on the three general self-esteem scores (at three time periods) indicated a significant interaction of Sex and Race (except for Time 3), as well as main effects of both factors. Across all three measures of self-esteem, means for Black adolescents were higher than those for White adolescents, and means for women were higher than those for men. Multiple classification analysis (MCA, SPSS-X, 1985) was used to calculate the mean for the self-esteem measures for the two racial groups, after adjustment for Sex. For SELF1 (time 1 self-esteem), the grand mean was 3.88 (SD=.61). Adjusted means were 4.13 and 3.83 for Blacks and Whites, respectively ($F(1,18630)= 383.17$, 92.56, and 60.37 for the Main effect of Race, Sex, and their interaction, respectively, $p<.001$ for all). For SELF2 (time 2 self-esteem) the grand mean was 4.06 (SD=.58); adjusted means were 4.16, and 4.03 for Blacks and Whites, respectively ($F(1, 18445)= 171.78$, 39.87, and 5.27 for the Main effect of Race, Sex, and their interaction, respectively, $p<.001$ for the main effects, and $<.02$ for the interaction). For SELF3 (time 3 self-esteem), the grand mean was 4.16 (SD=.54), and the adjusted means were 4.20 and 4.15 for Blacks and Whites, respectively ($F(1, 17698)= 9.82$, 18.86,

and 0.01 for the Main effect of Race, Sex, and their interaction, respectively, ($p<.001$ for the main effects). Despite statistical significance, the magnitude of differences between Blacks and Whites approached zero over time.

It was expected that racial differences would manifest themselves differently within the two sexes. For this reason, all comparisons were performed separately within each sex . The means for the general self- esteem scores of respondents are presented in Table 1. As that table shows, in 1980, Black adolescents had slightly higher general self-esteem scores than White adolescents. Although the magnitude of these differences is small, they are quite consistent across sex and age groups. Differences were more pronounced for Black females than for Black males. The base year (1980) standard deviation for females was .63 (.60 for Blacks, .62 for Whites); for males, it was .60 (.62 for Blacks, .59 for Whites). Hence, among females, racial differences in self-esteem ranged from more than half of a standard deviation among 16 year olds to about one-fourth of a standard deviation among 19 year olds. Two years later, the differences were weaker, but still consistent, a trend that continued four years later as well.

/***** Table 1 about here *****/

Analysis of variance (MANOVA, SPSS-X, 1985) with time as the within subjects factor and race and age as between subject factors was performed within each gender. For males, the Race by Age by Time effect was not significant, nor was the interaction of Race by Time. However, there was a significant interaction of Age by Time. Main effects of Time, Race, and Age were also significant. These results show that, although race effects were significant, change in race differences across time was not significant. For females, all interactions and main effects were significant. It might be

concluded that there were race differences for females, but these differences decreased significantly as female adolescents grew older. This is consistent with the results of separate ANOVAs presented earlier.

OTHER SELF-PERCEPTIONS:

Perceived Social Attractiveness: While an assessment of all possible factors that might represent components of the self-concept and that might differentiate race and sex groups is beyond the scope of this report, a social attractiveness composite score available in 1980 was included because of its relevance in other studies of Black and White, male and female adolescents in association with general self-esteem measures. Analysis of variance indicated significant main effects of Race and Sex on this measure ($F(1,18412)=42.89$, 143.65, and 2.26, respectively for Race, Sex, and the interaction, $p<.001$ for the main effects). However, examination of the means indicated that the magnitude of differences between Blacks and Whites was very small. The means were 1.83 and 1.79 (out of a maximum of 2.00) for Blacks and Whites, respectively. With a standard deviation of .26 in the total sample, this difference is essentially negligible.

Academic Performance: Self-report of grades might be considered an index of 'academic self-concept' (Marsh, Parker, & Barnes, 1985). Responses to a 1980 question about grades so far in high school were recoded from 1 ['Mostly below D (below 60)'] to 8 ['Mostly A (a numerical average of 90-100)']. Means were 5.22 for Blacks (4.99 for males, 5.42 for females), and 5.65 for Whites (5.38 for males, and 5.91 for females). Main effects of Race and Sex were significant ($F(1,19183)=321.47$ and 521.08, respectively, $p<.001$). A difference of .39 points among females, and .49 points among males is not very large (SD=1.50 in females, 1.58 in males, and 1.56 in the total sample). The fact

that Black adolescents had a lower self-evaluation of performance is inconsistent with their higher self-evaluation of future academic ability (see below).

B: PERCEPTIONS OF CONTROL:

Global, Cultural, Control: Similar to the previous analyses, ANOVAs were performed on the measures deemed to represent global perceptions of control for the three time periods, and the MCA procedures were used to calculate the adjusted means for Race. For all three time periods, the main effects of Race and Sex, as well as the interaction of these two factors, were significant. Blacks, overall, had lower perceptions of internal control over events. For CONTROL1 (time 1 perceived control), the grand mean was 3.56 (SD=.74). The adjusted means were 3.41 and 3.61, respectively, for Blacks and Whites ($F(1,18620)=270.21$, 115.21, and 10.53 for main effects of Race, Sex, and the interaction, respectively, $p<.001$ for all). For CONTROL2 (time2), the grand mean was 3.69 (SD=.73). The adjusted means were 3.51 and 3.75, respectively, for Blacks and Whites ($F(1,18408)=394.24$, 79.05, and 23.29, respectively, for effects of Race, Sex, and their interaction, $p<.001$ for all). For CONTROL3 (time 3), the grand mean was 3.82 (SD=.69). The adjusted means were 3.62 and 3.89 for Blacks and Whites, respectively ($F(1,17698)=495.35$, 19.62, and 10.58 for Race, Sex, and the interaction of Race and Sex, , $p<.001$ for all). The sample as a whole, and both the Black and the White adolescents, shifted toward greater internal control over time. Despite these shifts, Blacks consistently perceived less internal control than Whites across all three waves.

As before, further analyses were performed within each gender, to explore race differences across different age groups. Table 2 presents the means. Within males, Analysis of Variance (SPSS-X, 1985) with Time as the within

subjects factor and Race and Age as between subjects factors indicated significant interaction and main effects of Age and Race, a significant effect of Time, and a significant interaction of Time by Age. Within females, main effects of Race and Time and the interaction between these were significant, as were the main effect of Time, the interaction of Time and Age, and the triple interaction of Time, Age, and Race. The Race by Time interaction was not significant for either sex.

Examination of Race differences within each sex and within age groups indicated that at time 1 (1980) the greatest differences were present between Black and White 19 year old females. Compared to a standard deviation of .73 in females (and .74 in the total sample), the difference of .50 units is about two-thirds of a standard deviation. Among male 19-year olds, the racial difference was about one-half of a standard deviation (=.75 for males). Racial differences were also considerable in 18 year old females (about one-half of a standard deviation). Overall, differences increased slightly over time, although Black female adolescents who were 18 or 19 years old in 1980 and Black males who were 19 years old in that year stayed the least internal in later years as well. Also, racial patterns across age groups were more similar in 1986 than in previous years (i.e., difference scores were closer to each other in 1986 than in 1980).

/**** Table 2 about here ****/

Personal Control (Efficacy): Personal efficacy scores of Black and White adolescents did not differ significantly in 1980 ($F(1,18499)=.52$). Only the main effect of Sex was significant ($F(1,18499)=62.17$, $p<.001$). The mean for Blacks was 3.78 (3.71 and 3.77, respectively, for females and males). For Whites, the mean was 3.69 (3.68 and 3.78 for females and males, respectively).

Within age groups, racial differences ranged between -.13 (19 year old males) to .00 (19 year old females). In 1982, both main effects of Race and Sex were significant ($F(1,18319)=13.37$ and 61.06, respectively, $p<.001$). In 1986, both main effects and the interaction of Race and Sex were significant ($F(1,17673)=28.87$, 72.29, and 16.64, respectively, $p<.001$).

Despite statistical significance, the magnitude of racial differences was very small (see Table 3). In 1982, the mean for Blacks was 3.82 (3.88 for males, 3.77 for females); for Whites it was 3.87 (3.90 for males, 3.83 for females). In 1986, the mean for Blacks was 3.87 (3.85 for males, 3.81 for females); for Whites it was 3.94 (3.97 for males, 3.90 for females). Given the standard deviations of .71 and .67 for the total sample in 1982 and 1986, respectively, these differences do not seem to be considerable. Overall, Blacks had slightly lower (more external) personal efficacy scores than Whites, and females had lower personal efficacy scores than males.

/**** Table 3 about here ****/

Academic Success: One measure that appeared to tap expectations of success, and thus to represent an associated causal perspective, was available in 1980. Respondents were asked: "whatever your plans, do you think you have the ability to complete college?" For the purpose of this study, responses were recoded from 1 (definitely not) to 5 (yes, definitely). Blacks had a mean of 4.23 (4.21 for males and 4.25 for females), and Whites had a mean of 4.07 (4.04 for males, 4.10 for females). The ANOVA indicated significant main effects of Race and Sex ($F(1,18318)= 83.05$ and 15.38, respectively, $p<.001$). The interaction was not significant. Although Black adolescents had a significantly higher self-attribution of academic ability, the magnitude of this difference was not considerable, compared to a standard deviation of 1.02

in the sample. The slightly higher self-attribution of ability by Black adolescents is inconsistent with self-reported academic performance (see above).

General Mood: In 1980, there was a question on a three-point response scale about feeling sad or depressed. It is not clear whether such an item measures a response to causal perceptions or other aspects of the self, but it would seem to reflect the McJamerson (1990) observations about the hopelessness of Black males, in particular. Overall, Blacks had a slightly higher self-attribution of negative mood. The difference was statistically significant, but again not considerable in magnitude.

DISCUSSION

On general self-esteem scores, Blacks rated themselves more positive than Whites; the difference was close to half of a standard deviation in some age groups. However, the magnitude of differences in specific self-beliefs, such as academic ability and social attractiveness, was quite small. Similarly, Blacks expressed more external beliefs than Whites on measures of general/global locus of control; the difference was close to two-thirds of a standard deviation in some age groups. However, differences in specific aspects of locus of control, such as self-efficacy, were relatively small.

Self-esteem can be considered a general attitude or evaluation about the self, being based on (or being the sum total of) many specific beliefs, each linking the self to a desirable or undesirable attribute (Tashakkori & Thompson, 1989). Such attributes can be quite varied: I am attractive; I am intelligent; I am in control. At any given moment, some of these beliefs would be expected to be more salient, or important or relevant, than others (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980), and hence should affect general self-esteem more strongly at

that point in time and in that setting. For example, in educational settings, beliefs about one's intellectual and scholastic competence might contribute more heavily than other beliefs to a self-esteem evaluation, while physical competence might be weighted more heavily in an athletic setting. In both cases, the strength of the beliefs (e.g. how intelligent am I?) and the evaluation of the attribute (e.g. how good is it to be intelligent?) depend partly on information obtained through social comparison with others, feedback from others, observation of social standards, and so on.

Given such considerations, what can be said about race differences in self-esteem and self-perception, and how can the literature, in which we find inconsistencies among studies, be interpreted? The first explanation for the inconsistency among findings is that constructs may be measured at different levels of specificity. If Blacks and Whites use different reference groups or standards for self-evaluation of some, but not all, attributes (as White and Parham, 1990, suggest that they do), race differences would be observed in some, but not all, self-beliefs. Different measures based on different attributes could lead to different patterns of racial differences. For example, somewhat similarly to the present findings, Hunt and Hunt (1977) have reported higher levels of self-regard but lower levels of self-efficacy among Blacks, as compared to Whites.

Martinez and Dukes (1987) interpreted the inconsistency in findings on the basis of a likely differentiation between 'public' and 'private' domains of self-perception. They argue that self-worth falls in the private domain, while evaluation of one's own ability or intelligence falls in the public domain. Further, they hold that public self-evaluations are based on public standards, heavily derived from the majority or 'dominant' group. In these domains,

Blacks would use White standards to evaluate their ability, achievement, or intelligence. On the other hand, judgments in the private domain are based on internal, or 'own,' standards. Black self-evaluations in such areas might be expected to be based on Black, rather than White, standards. This explanation is certainly interesting and appealing. On the other hand, although it might explain the lower self-evaluation of intelligence or competence of Blacks in a White-dominated culture, it cannot explain the rather higher self-esteem of Blacks.

Theoretically, self-esteem - representing general self-worth or self-evaluation - can be obtained in two ways. It can be the sum total (or the average) of a number of self-beliefs, or it can be the result of general self-worth scales such as the one developed by Rosenberg. If, indeed, Blacks and Whites differentially evaluate themselves on different aspects, but not on all aspects, of the self-concept, either type of measurement can lead to spurious results that suggest either small or large differences between the races. In the first (sum total) case, the nature of elements measured and the balancing of or differential emphasis on elements could lead to results showing differences or similarities. In the second (general measure) case, the framework of the individual's evaluations is obscured: for example, one cannot differentiate between those emphasizing attractiveness and those emphasizing academic aspects of the self-concept.

To these problems, one can add the possible differential reactions of Blacks and Whites to measurement scales. Blacks might respond to items differently than Whites because some items might arouse certain cognitive or evaluative sets that are culturally or socially important. For example, responses to such a statement as 'I am a person of worth on an equal basis

with others' could be affected by constant threats of negative evaluation by the majority in the culture, and strong agreement with such an item could indicate reactance, defensive attribution, denial, or simply a reality which is more important for the Black than for the White adolescent.

Measures such as perceived control are also surely critical in the way in which individuals rate themselves on self-concept measures, and responses to such items may also involve different biases and perceptions. More importantly, scales composed of multiple measures of causality may well contain different realms of control, in which respondents may differ. As noted earlier, early research Coleman et al. (1966) and Gurin et al. (1969) showed that Blacks showed greater externality than Whites in perceptions pertaining to personal referents, but relatively equal, or even higher, internality in relation to more global, cultural perceptions. More recent research (e.g., Gurin & Epps, 1975; Gaa, Williams & Johnson, 1981) has substantiated that there are differentiated perceptions about causality, and that these perceptions produce differential effects. Our results offer support for differences in responses in major causal domains (internal and external locus of control vis a vis global and personal realms), but do not conform well with earlier findings. Blacks, overall, had lower perceptions of internal control over global events. The sample as a whole, and both the Black and the White adolescents, did shift toward greater internal control over time, which might be expected with increasing age. Despite these shifts, Blacks consistently perceived less internal control than Whites across all three waves. With regard to personal efficacy, Blacks had slightly lower scores than Whites. Blacks did tend to show higher expectations of specific success, in the academic realm, but their reported success was lower than that of Whites. Females tended to show less

self-efficacy than males. In no case were race or sex effects great or of great practical significance.

The present findings are encouraging in many respects. Differences exist between races, and between sexes; while they may be significant, they are rarely of large magnitude, and they tend to dissipate over time, to some degree, as adolescents leave school and become adults. The existence of differences, and the patterns of differences, however, require continuing attention. In particular, attempting to develop a more complete picture of the self-esteem arena is important for developing intervention efforts. If we can understand what perceptions underlie the self-esteem, we can more readily develop change efforts directed at altering both those perceptions and the self-concept of persons who do suffer from negative self-evaluations.

Table 1. Mean self-esteem scores of respondents at three time periods (d=difference between Blacks and Whites)

Age in 1980	1980			1982			1986		
	Black	White	d	Black	White	d	Black	White	d
Males:									
16	3.98	3.87	.11	4.18	4.02	.16	4.25	4.18	.07
17	3.86	3.80	.06	4.01	3.95	.06	4.11	4.13	-.02
18	4.07	3.95	.12	4.22	4.16	.06	4.26	4.20	.06
19	3.97	3.95	.02	4.17	4.13	.04	4.18	4.11	.07
Total	4.01	3.89	.12	4.17	4.06	.11	4.23	4.18	.05
Females:									
16	4.04	3.71	.33	4.15	3.93	.22	4.25	4.13	.12
17	4.01	3.70	.31	4.16	3.88	.28	4.16	4.08	.08
18	4.07	3.87	.20	4.12	4.12	.00	4.18	4.16	.02
19	3.96	3.80	.16	4.15	4.06	.09	4.13	4.10	.03
Total	4.04	3.76	.28	4.14	3.99	.15	4.19	4.13	.06

Table 2. Mean of the perceived control and personal efficacy scales for the respondents (d=Blacks-Whites)

Age in 1980	1980			1982			1986		
	Black	White	d	Black	White	d	Black	White	d
PERCEIVED CONTROL:									
Male									
16	3.41	3.38	.03	3.59	3.68	-.09	3.69	3.87	-.18
17	3.31	3.65	-.34	3.37	3.51	-.14	3.51	3.74	-.23
18	3.46	3.65	-.19	3.58	3.79	-.21	3.69	3.90	-.21
19	3.25	3.62	-.37	3.36	3.77	-.41	3.50	3.84	-.34
Total	3.39	3.55	-.16	3.51	3.69	-.18	3.64	3.85	-.21
Female									
16	3.56	3.62	-.06	3.67	3.78	-.11	3.77	3.92	-.15
17	3.40	3.52	-.12	3.47	3.64	-.17	3.54	3.78	-.24
18	3.47	3.83	-.36	3.50	3.92	-.42	3.64	3.98	-.34
19	3.22	3.72	-.50	3.36	3.83	-.47	3.39	3.84	-.45
Total	3.45	3.68	-.23	3.53	3.81	-.28	3.63	3.92	-.29
SELF-EFFICACY:									
Males									
16	3.78	3.73	.05	3.95	3.88	.07	3.97	3.98	-.01
17	3.70	3.74	-.04	3.84	3.89	-.05	3.96	3.94	.02
18	3.78	3.83	-.05	3.87	3.94	-.07	3.96	3.98	-.02
19	3.77	3.90	-.13	3.87	3.91	-.04	3.93	3.93	.00
Total	3.77	3.78	-.02	3.88	3.90	-.02	3.95	3.97	-.02
Females									
16	3.68	3.66	.02	3.82	3.79	.03	3.81	3.91	-.10
17	3.68	3.66	.02	3.78	3.83	-.05	3.78	3.90	-.12
18	3.74	3.72	.02	3.74	3.90	-.16	3.81	3.91	-.10
19	3.72	3.72	.00	3.78	3.84	-.06	3.79	3.83	-.04
Total	3.71	3.68	.03	3.77	3.83	-.06	3.80	3.90	-.10

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